



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

farewell to the world and explains that he could not live on his pension, that he had borne asthma and other annoyances for years, only to find that he had now to bear cancer. So with plans still halting and achieving in mid-air, he took his own life. It is not in the rough-and-ready economy of this world to nurse genius. The survival of the fittest is its method, and that means that who can hew down surrounding growth and clear a space may stand. Apparently John Davidson could not accomplish this. He desired to make things which the world did not want and would not pay for. The world was not all unkind to him; it gave him a little pension, but it would not buy his wares. Doubtless the world would be a lovelier planet if it bought more poetry and less meat; if it applauded spiritual aspirations and noble insight and turned its back on cunning, greed and power. But the world is so big and poets are so little, who shall constrain it? They must even consent to serve beauty and truth without reward. John Davidson has the strength of revolt against an evil order in all his poems. To those who neglected his development since his first three volumes until the last one the notable points are the increase of minute observation; the intent, strained attention to microscopic detail; the unrelieved self-consciousness, the mind turning trebly in upon itself and over-intent to every step of its operations. The handling of words is remarkable and the descriptions are exact to the point of eloquence; it is truth hounded and tracked until it shrieks its name.

No man living to-day speaks of poetry with more authoritative voice than Robert Bridges,* and so this volume bearing his introduction and his seal is to be reverently handled by students of poetry. The Memoir and Introduction is all one could ask, reverent, interpretative, self-effacing.

The Poems themselves, barring the wonderfully pictorial "St. Mary Magdalene," are frankly difficult and have no word at all for the facile reader. Profound and philosophic thought clothed always in austere garmenting, indeed sometimes by almost impenetrable veils, is what is offered. To those who persevere de-

* "Selected Poems of Richard Watson Dixon with a Memoir." By Robert Bridges. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1909.

spite this, much richness of thought will be given, though no solution of problems is attempted. The poems treat much

"Of the measureless annoy
The pain and havoc wrought
By fate on man."

To the question of the meaning of natural phenomena regarded as data from which man may deduce or conjecture his relation to the mind of the universe, Mr. Bridges says Canon Dixon's answer attempts no further decision than this: that "nature is grave and rebuking man's folly forbids any bad solution." The final words of the book give insight into the matter and quality:

"But let me not have failed to heaven and earth
In setting forth with order not undue
The mighty workers of this world's affairs,
Fatality, infinity, these two,
The one the only yoke the other wears."

If Mr. Bridges's sincere and scholarly preface is all that such a work should be, Mr. Gilbert Chesterton's Introduction is all that has no right to the circulation of print. It is pert, flippant and insincere; it slings about irreverently great names, great words and great causes. It is a child's wanton dragging of smuggled treasure through the dust of the daily frolic. It is a question whether the duty of the critic is to pass the work by with the silent scorn it deserves or to warn such as might be deceived that the whole matter is a little word-juggling meant to deceive their simplicity. To one who can write of the "aimless revolt of Shelley" and who can say such silly things as that "the revolution succeeded in France because it was an affair of soldiers; the revolution failed in England because it was an affair of poets," there is little to reply. It merely means that cheap journalism has won a cheap freedom to utter pert remarks by a fat and phlegmatic optimism too lazy to know its facts or weigh its words.

The poems* which Mr. Chesterton thus introduces had knocked, so the author naïvely tells us, for four years at the publisher's doors in vain. The writer meant well and might have been par-

* "A Vision of Life." Darrell Figgis. With an Introduction by Gilbert Chesterton. New York: John Lane & Co., 1909.